



We Are Columbia

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **City Provides Water Safety Update**

In light of recent national and local concerns about lead levels in drinking water, the City of Columbia wants to reassure its customers that your drinking water is safe and meets all regulatory standards. In the early 1990s, the U.S. EPA introduced new guidelines for lead levels in drinking water, which took effect in the mid-1990s and was fully implemented by the late-1990s. Since 1998, water leaving City of Columbia customers' taps has consistently met these requirements. Lead levels in the water leaving the City's drinking water treatment plants are normally below detection levels, well below the maximum levels set by the EPA.

The City also actively works to protect customers from lead that might be in their own pipes. Typically, lead in drinking water comes from the water sitting for extended periods of time in lead service lines or homes plumbed with copper pipe and lead based solder. The City's corrosion control efforts create a protective barrier on these lines. "We consider our corrosion control efforts a great success. They have helped us keep lead levels down and have been part of our routine water treatment for almost 20 years", said Clint Shealy, Water Works Superintendent for the City of Columbia. And the few lead service lines that still remain in our system are replaced any time they are discovered.

The City also wants you to know what steps you can take to protect yourself and your family from lead in your drinking water. When water has been sitting in your home plumbing pipes for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by running your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using the water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned that your house may have copper pipes with lead based solder, the City will perform free lead testing.

For more information about how to minimize lead in your drinking water or to inquire about a water sample, please contact the City of Columbia Customer Care Center at (803) 545-3300.

Each year the City publishes the detected levels of lead in your drinking water in the Water Quality Report, which is posted at [www.COLACCR.com](http://www.COLACCR.com).

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